The Baptiſm of Jeſus Chriſt not *to be imitated by Chriſtians:*

CONSIDERED and ILLUSTRATED

IN AN

ESSAY.

By the Rev. ELISHA FISH, of *Upton.*

AND THE

Rev. JOHN CRANE, of *Northbridge.*

For verily, I ſay unto you, till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.

For all the prophets and the law propheſied until John.

JESUS CHRIST.

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A N

ESSAY.

MATTHEW III, 15.

And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto him, Suffer it to be ſo now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs. Then he ſuffered him.

THE tranſaction between John the Baptiſt and Jeſus Chriſt forms a ſubject of an intereſting nature: and what took place between them deſerves attention and ſpecial notice.

Chriſt had come from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him; but John, inſtead of baptizing Chriſt, who preſented himſelf for that purpoſe, ſeemed at firſt to decline the performance. "But John forbade him, ſaying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comeſt thou to me?" In anſwer to this Chriſt allows what John had ſaid of his need of being baptized of Chriſt, yet he requires John to baptize him, and gives this reaſon for it: *for thus* ſaith he, *it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs.* This conſideration, Chriſt offered to John as a reaſon, why on this occaſion, he ſhould adminiſter baptiſm to *him*; and it was ſatisfactory to John. *Then he ſuffered him.*

The ſubject of inquiry before us, is to find out what

what is meant by fulfilling all righteouſneſs in this place: and in order to obtain this point, it will be proper to ſay negatively,

1. It does not mean that Chriſt was baptized to manifeſt his repentance.

When John baptized the people, their baptiſm diſcovered repentance: for this was a deſign of his baptiſm. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance." "Then ſaid Paul, John verily, baptized with the baptiſm of repentance." In this ſenſe it muſt be underſtood when it was applied to the people; but this cannot be the meaning of his baptiſm, when it was applied to Chriſt: for Chriſt was not a ſinner; "He was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners.*" And when he gave up his life a ſacrifice he was without ſin. "*Who through the eternal ſpirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God.*" There was then nothing in the baptiſm of Chriſt which ſignified repentance.

2. Neither did Chriſt receive baptiſm as a token that he was waſhed from ſin. It cannot be denied, that baptiſm in ſome inſtances, ſignifieth that a man is waſhed from ſin: ſo it is underſtood in the words of Ananias to Paul, "*Ariſe, and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins.*" But Chriſt did not receive baptiſm for this purpoſe, he could not; for he had no ſin to waſh away. He who was pure could not be waſhed from ſin: it is manifeſt therefore he could not receive a token of waſhing.

3. Neither did Chriſt ſubmit to baptiſm as an example to the Jewiſh nation. Chriſt was a great and ſhining example of imitation to the Jewiſh nation, in his general conduct among men: but in the inſtance

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of his baptiſm he was not a pattern for the people of Iſrael to follow. It never was the deſign of Chriſt that the Jews ſhould imitate his baptiſm; for Chriſt was not baptized until all the people were baptized. Indeed it muſt appear abundantly plain to every one who honeſtly examines this ſubject, that John's baptiſm ceaſed at the baptiſm of Chriſt. For Chriſt did not come to be baptized of John until after John had baptized all the people, who preſented themſelves to his baptiſm. Mark 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. *And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jeruſalem, and were all baptized of him* in the river of Jordan, confeſſing their ſins, "And John preached, ſaying, There cometh one mightier than I *after* me, the latchet of whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to ſtoop down and unlooſe."

I indeed have baptized you with water: but he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt. And it came to paſs in thoſe days that Jeſus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized of John in Jordan. And Luke gives us much the ſame account. See Chap. III. 20, 21. Herod added yet this above all that he ſhut up John in priſon. Now when *all the people* were baptized, it came to paſs that Jeſus alſo being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened.

It is quite manifeſt then from theſe places of Scripture, that Chriſt did not deſign to lead the Jewiſh nation down the banks of Jordan, in imitation of his baptiſm. Becauſe he received baptiſm of John after John had baptized all the people.

4. This tranſaction between John and Chriſt was not a fulfilling of all the righteouſneſs, which was inbent on Chriſt in the whole of his miniſtry.

This could not be the caſe. For the righteouſneſs

here

here mentioned, has reſpect to what paſſed between John and Chriſt at that time. It was confined to that occaſion. Therefore Chriſt did not fulfil all the righteouſneſs of his miniſtry in ſubmitting to baptiſm. For had it been ſo, his death on the croſs would have been needleſs: and his baptiſm would have been the finiſhing, inſtead of the beginning of his miniſtry.

We are now prepared to tell what is meant by fulfilling all righteouſneſs, in the words which ſtand at the head of this Eſſay.

It muſt here be remembered that Jeſus Chriſt was now about to enter upon his public miniſtry. As yet he had not acted in a public character.

He had now arrived to that period of life, at which the prieſts, under the legal diſpenſation, might be conſecrated to the ſervice of the miniſtry. For it was the command of God that no prieſt might enter on his public miniſtry until he was thirty years old. See Numbers IV. 23. From *thirty years old* aud upward, until fifty years old ſhalt thou number them; all that enter in to perform the ſervice, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation. Chriſt was now qualified for the prieſthood with reſpect to his age. When he was baptized it is ſaid, Luke III. 23. And Jeſus himſelf began to be about *thirty years of age.*

Jeſus being ready to take upon him the office of high Prieſt is about to conform to the law for conſecrating the prieſts at their entrance upon the prieſthood. And the fulfilling of all righteouſneſs in the text meaneth the accompliſhment of the typical introduction of Aaron into the office of high Prieſt. Aaron was a type of Chriſt, the Apoſtle and *high Prieſt* of our profeſſion. And when Aaron entered upon the prieſtly office he

paſſed

paſſed through preparatory ceremonies. And in ſubmitting to them he was a type of Chriſt the Meſſiah who was to come. Fulfilling of all righteouſneſs then muſt be conſidered as the performing what was commanded the high Prieſts at their entrance into office. And when this was done, the typical repreſentation of the high prieſt at his admiſſion to the prieſthood would be accompliſhed in Chriſt; and he would be made manifeſt to Iſrael, as the true Meſſiah.

In order to make this appear, it will be needful to call into view the law and directions for conſecration Aaron a high prieſt. Exod. xxix. 4, 5, 6, 7. And Aaron and his ſons thou ſhalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and ſhalt *waſh them with water*. And thou ſhalt take the *garments*, and put upon Aaron the coat and the robe of the Ephod, and the Ephod, and the breaſt-plate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the Ephod. And thou ſhalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the *holy crown* upon the mitre. Then ſhalt thou take the *anointing oil*, and pour it upon his head, and *anoint him*.

The directions for waſhing the prieſts are found in Exod. xxx. 18, 19, 20, 21. Thou ſhalt alſo make a laver of braſs, and his foot alſo of braſs, to waſh withal: and thou ſhalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou ſhalt put water therein. For Aaron and his ſons ſhall waſh their hands and their feet therein. When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they ſhall waſh with water, that they die not. So they ſhall waſh *their hands and their feet*, that they die not. And in Levit. viii. 6, 12: we are told that Moſes obeyed the commands of God reſpecting Aaron's conſecration. And Moſes brought Aaron and

his

his ſons and waſhed them with water. And he poured the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him to ſanctify him. When all theſe ſervices were performed, Aaron was introduced to the prieſthood. He was conſecrated a prieſt. He was called of God.

And here it will be well to obſerve that the mode of waſhing Aaron is clearly deſcribed. The *hands* and the *feet only were waſhed.*

After theſe quotations from the holy ſcriptures, the words now under conſideration, and their connections naturally preſent to view. There, we may ſee each part of Aaron's typical introduction to office exactly accompliſhed.

It cannot carry the fulfilment of theſe typical repreſentations too far by remarking,

1. That the baptiſm of Chriſt anſwers to the waſhing of the high Prieſt, at his admiſſion to the prieſthood.

It will not be denied by any that the words waſhing and baptiſm are of like import. In the holy ſcriptures they are uſed in ſome inſtances to ſignify the ſame thing. In the Jewiſh tabernacle there *were divers waſhings*, or baptiſms, of which that of waſhing the prieſt was doubtleſs one. The baptiſm of Chriſt then muſt be conſidered as the fulfilment of the law of prieſtly conſecration. Obedient to the authority of this law, Chriſt ſubmitted himſelf to baptiſm by John: and his baptiſm anſwers to that of waſhing the high Prieſt on the day of his conſecration.

2. That which was ſignified by the holy garments and holy crown of Aaron, was fulfilled at the baptiſm of Chriſt.

If we underſtand the holy garments of the high Prieſt to ſignify purity; then it was accompliſhed at the

the baptiſm of Chriſt. And in this light we may well conſider Aaron's coſtly attire. Pſal. XLV. 13, 14. The king's daughter is all glorious within : *her cloathing is of wrought gold.* She ſhall be brought unto the king *in raiment of needle work.* The cloathing of wrought gold, and the raiment of needle work here mentioned, is undoubtedly an emblem of purity. And the holy crown of Aaronmuſt, in like manner, repreſent the kingly office of Chriſt, the Meſſiah who was to come. In the prophecy of Zechariah we read thus, Chap. VI. 11, 12, 13. Then take the ſilver and gold, and make *crowns* and ſet them upon the head of Joſhua, the ſon of Joſedeck the high Prieſt ; and ſpeak unto him, ſaying, Thus ſpeaketh the LORD of hoſts, ſaying, Behold, the man whoſe name is the BRANCH : and he ſhall grow up out of his place, and he ſhall build the temple of the LORD ; even he ſhall build the temple of the LORD ; and he ſhall bear the glory, and ſhall ſit and rule upon his throne ; Theſe words teach us that crowns on the head of the high Prieſt, repreſent the kingly authority of Jeſus Chriſt.

If then purity and power were typified by the garments and the crown of Aaron ; then the things ſignified by them were exactly accompliſhed at the baptiſm of Chriſt. For at that time we hear it ſaid, Matt. III. 17. And lo, a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, *in whom I am well pleaſed.* This audible voice from heaven, confirms the divine miſſion of Chriſt, and declares him to be the true Meſſiah. And the honor and glory which he received on this occaſion proclaim his purity and his power. 2 Peter, I. 17. For he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excellent

glory; This is my beloved Son, *in whom I am well pleaſed.*

3. That which was ſignified by the holy oil poured upon Aaron's head, was fulfilled at the baptiſm of Chriſt.

This holy anointing of the high Prieſt muſt be conſidered as an emblem of the holy Spirit which God ſhould give Chriſt without meaſure, Luke III. 21, 22. "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to paſs that Jeſus alſo being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened. And the holy Ghoſt deſcended in a bodily ſhape, like a dove upon him." In reference to this, Chriſt in the ſcriptures is frequently called the *anointed.* Pſal. II. 2. The kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take council together againſt the LORD, and againſt *his anointed.* Acts x. 38. God *anointed Jeſus of Nazareth with the holy Ghoſt*, and with power.

4. John was ſent to bear witneſs that Chriſt was the Meſſiah pointed out by the introductory ceremonies of the high Prieſt.

It is quite plain, John was ſent a ſpecial meſſenger to bear witneſs to the exact accompliſhment of what was typified by the introduction of Aaron to the prieſtly office. John I. 6, 7. There was a man ſent from God, whoſe name was John. The ſame came for a witneſs, to bear witneſs of the Light, that all men through him might believe. Chap. I. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. The next day, John ſeeth Jeſus coming unto him, and ſaith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world. This is he of whom I ſaid, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael, *therefore am I come*

baptizing

baptizing with water. In theſe words John plainly tells us, that the deſign of his water baptiſm was to manifeſt Chriſt to Iſrael. He was a witneſs that Chriſt was the true Meſſiah. For he ſaw the things fulfilled which were ſignified by the holy garments, the holy crown, and the holy anointing of Aaron at his introduction to office. He ſaw the holy Ghoſt deſcend like a dove and abide upon him: and he heard the voice from heaven, declaring him to be the beloved Son of God. *And I ſaw and bear record, that this is the Son of God.*

It is to the purpoſe here to obſerve, that for this very reaſon the Jews hated Chriſt without a cauſe. Had not Chriſt entered upon his public miniſtry in ſuch a manner as to ſhow he was the true Meſſiah: had he not been conſecrated according to law, the Jews would not have been guilty in rejecting him. God gave it in expreſs command to that people, to reject the prophet, or dreamer who led them after other gods. With this command in view, the Jews, under miſtaken notions of Chriſt ſaid, John xix. 7. We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, becauſe he *hath made himſelf the Son of God.* In the ſame light Paul viewed Chriſt in the day of his perſecution. Acts xxvi. 9. I verily thought with myſelf, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth.

Chriſt was obedient to every commandment of God. He entered upon his miniſtry exactly as the law required the high Prieſts to enter upon office. And he did all the works and wonders, which the law and the prophets had pointed out for him to do. Had he failed in entering his miniſtry as the law directed, he would not have fulfilled all righteouſneſs: and had he not exactly anſwered the character given of him in the old

teſtament

teſtament, the Jews would not have been charged with ſin in rejecting him. Chriſt ſaith, John xv. 24, 25. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had ſin: but now have they both ſeen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to paſs that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, they hated me without a cauſe.

And here we take liberty to digreſs, and obſerve that the complete fulfilment of what was written in the law and the prophets, is a ſtanding demonſtration of the divine authority of the holy ſcriptures. In the types, ſhadows, and prophecies of the old teſtament, the character, the office, the works and miracles, as well as the enemies of Chriſt, are clearly brought into view. This exact accompliſhment of the old teſtament, in the evangeliſts, proves the holy ſcriptures were given by inſpiration of God.

5. The reſemblance between Moſes and John ſtill confirmeth what has been ſaid. Moſes and John were both of the ſame family, the tribe of Levi. Moſes, the greateſt prophet that then had ever ariſen, introduced Aaron to the prieſthood. John, as great as Moſes, introduced Chriſt to his miniſtry. Moſes was not waſhed himſelf; but he waſhed Aaron at the command of God. So John himſelf, was not baptized; but he was ſent of God to baptize Chriſt. Moſes reſigned his office to Joſhua. So John reſigned to Chriſt. Moſes ſoon died after he had given up his office to Joſhua. So John ſoon died after he had baptized Chriſt, and introduced him to his public miniſtry. Moſes pointed out Chriſt. So did John. Moſes prepared the way for the introduction of Aaron to the prieſthood. So did John prepare the way of Chriſt.

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From theſe remarks it is plain, that what was done when Aaron received the prieſthood, was exactly fulfilled at the baptiſm of Chriſt. And now it muſt be eaſy to ſee what is meant by fulfilling all righteouſneſs in the text. It was obeying the command of God in conſecrating the high Prieſt. When therefore Chriſt was baptized, he was conſecrated.

No man, under the law, might take the place of Prieſt, but ſuch as were called of God. And Chriſt did not take this office upon him without the command of God, and in full conformity to the divine law. Hebrews v. 4, 5. And no man taketh this honor unto himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So alſo Chriſt glorified not himſelf to be made an high Prieſt, but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. Chap. VII. 28. For the law maketh men high Prieſts which have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was ſince the law, maketh the Son who is *conſecrated for evermore.*

And now it may be ſolemnly aſked, where was the typical introduction of Aaron accompliſhed, if it was not done at the baptiſm of Chriſt? If it be remembered that Chriſt ſaith, for verily I ſay unto you, till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled. And do we believe that all typical repreſentations have their fulfillment? Where then can the fulfillment of what was done at Aaron's conſecration be found, if it is not found at the baptiſm of Chriſt by John?

The next advance is to prove that John's baptiſm was not new-teſtament, or chriſtian baptiſm.

This will be made to appear by the following conſiderations;

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1. The ends propoſed by John's baptiſm were really different from thoſe of new-teſtament baptiſm. The grand end and deſign of John's baptiſm, was the diſcovery, or pointing out of Chriſt to the Jewiſh nation, that the people might receive and believe in him. John 1. 7, 31, 32, 33, 34. "John came for a witneſs, to bear witneſs of the Light, that all men through him might believe. And I knew him not: but that he ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bear record, ſaying, I ſaw the Spirit deſcending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not; but he that ſent me to baptize with water, the ſame ſaid unto me, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the holy Ghoſt. And I ſaw, and bear record, that this is the Son of God." From theſe words it is plain that the great deſign of John's baptiſm was to point out Chriſt to the people of Iſrael. But it is equally plain that new-teſtament baptiſm is deſigned for other purpoſes. In ſome inſtances it is uſed to ſignify the waſhing away of ſins. Acts xxii. 16. Ariſe, and be baptized, *and waſh away thy ſins.* In other places, believers under the goſpel, are ſaid to be baptized into the death of Chriſt. Rom. vi. 3. Know ye not that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death. But John's baptiſm could not be uſed in this manner: for Chriſt was not yet crucified. And therefore men could not be baptized into his death. Hence it appears that John's baptiſm, and new-teſtament baptiſm, were really different in their ends and uſe. And therefore John's baptiſm could not be new-teſtament or chriſtian baptiſm.

2. The

2. The ſame thing is further apparent becauſe John's baptiſm was confined to the Jewiſh nation. John preached repentance only in Judea; and it was only the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and people of Judea, who came to his baptiſm. In that day the word of God was confined to the Jewiſh tribes; and Chriſt in his miniſtry, preached only to the children of the covenant. It was ſometime after the aſcenſion of Chriſt, before the goſpel was preached to the Gentiles.

From this we cannot help ſeeing that the baptiſm of John was confined to the region of Judea. But new-teſtament baptiſm extends to all the nations of the earth. The commiſſion which Chriſt gave his diſciples runs thus: Matt. xxviii. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt. This makes it appear that John's baptiſm was not the baptiſm of the new teſtament.

3. This is ſtill manifeſt becauſe John's baptiſm continued only to the end of his life. It laſted till the time of his impriſonment or death; it ceaſed with him. For it appears when all the people were baptized by John, that Chriſt came and was baptized: and immediately after this, John was impriſoned. Herod added yet this above all, that he ſhut up John in priſon. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to paſs that Jeſus alſo being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened. It is plain the baptiſm of John ended with him: and it is plain too that when the miniſtry of Chriſt begun, John's baptiſm was finiſhed. Acts x. 37. "That word, you know, which was publiſhed throughout

throughout all Judea, and begun from Galilee, *after the baptiſm which John preached.*"

But new-teſtament baptiſm is to continue to the end of the world. Matt. xxviii. 20. Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Since therefore John's baptiſm ended with him, it cannot be new-teſtament baptiſm.

4. The declaration of Chriſt concerning John, proves the point under conſideration. Matt. xi. 11. Verily, I ſay unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not riſen a greater than John the Baptiſt: notwithſtanding he that is leaſt in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Theſe words of Chriſt make it plain that John finiſhed his miniſtry under the old and legal diſpenſation; and on this account he was leſs than the leaſt in the goſpel kingdom. If then it is certain that John finiſhed his miniſtry under the Moſaic diſpenſation, no one will preſume that John's baptiſm is new-teſtament baptiſm; but every one on the contrary muſt conclude it was not. But,

5. The ſubject in hand is further evident, becauſe John's baptiſm was not in the name of the holy Trinity.

This is made manifeſt from the account given us in Acts xix. 2, 3, 4, 5. Paul finding certain diſciples, he ſaid unto them, have ye received the holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed? And they ſaid unto him, we have not ſo much as heard whether there be any holy Ghoſt. And he ſaid unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? And they ſaid, unto John's baptiſm. Then ſaid Paul, John verily baptized with the baptiſm of repentance, ſaying unto the people, That they ſhould believe on him which ſhould come after him, that is, on *Chriſt Jeſus.*

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When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus. On theſe words two remarks may be made.

1. The twelve diſciples mentioned in the words now quoted, appear to be ignorant of the uſe of the holy Trinity. They ſay we have not ſo much as heard whether there be any holy Ghoſt. They had been baptized unto John's baptiſm; but appear not to have heard the Trinity named. This ſhows the holy Ghoſt had not been named in John's baptiſm; and conſequently his baptiſm cannot be new-teſtament baptiſm. For all will own that the holy Trinity is to be named in the baptiſm of the new teſtament.

2. The twelve diſciples before mentioned were rebaptized. When Paul enlightened them into the nature of John's baptiſm, and told them that his baptiſm was only introductory to Chriſt; then they were immediately rebaptized. This proves to a demonſtration that John's baptiſm was not new-teſtament baptiſm. For had it been the ſame kind of baptiſm uſed in the new teſtament, it would have been needleſs and unwarrantable to repeat it.

After Chriſt aroſe from the dead he commiſſioned his diſciples to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt. But John could not baptize Chriſt *in his own name:* it were too abſurd to ſuppoſe it. Therefore it is ſufficiently plain the Trinity was not named in John's baptiſm; which makes it clear that *his* baptiſm was not the ſame that is uſed in the new teſtament.

6. This truth is yet confirmed, becauſe John's baptiſm begun and ended under the old teſtament diſpenſation. In the prophets it is ſpoken of as that which

ſhould take place before the coming of the Meſſiah; and in the Evangeliſts it ſtands recorded as compleated accordingly; that every thing reſpecting the coming, doctrine, miracles, life, death and reſurrection of Chriſt, might fully prove him to be the promiſed Meſſiah. To make this manifeſt ſeems to be the united deſign of all the Evangeliſts.

And the ſcriptures plainly teach us that Chriſt after John's death, carefully maintained his obedience to all the Jewiſh law, even to the night in which he was betrayed: at which time he inſtituted the holy ſacrament: and gave his diſciples a ſample of his deſign and command. But he refuſed to drink of the cup at that time. Matt. xxvi. 29. But I ſay unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. By theſe words Chriſt intimated that he would not commune with them in this adminiſtration before his death, as he ſhould do, after the new teſtament was confirmed by his blood. For the goſpel, or new teſtament diſpenſation, could not begin until Chriſt was nailed to the Croſs. Heb. ix. 16. For where a teſtament is, there muſt alſo of neceſſity be *the death of the teſtator.*

It muſt be allowed then, beyond all diſpute, that the legal diſpenſation, with all the Jewiſh rites, continued through the miniſtry of Chriſt even to his death: and that the whole of the Jewiſh law, was in full force until the vail of the temple was rent in twain.

Chriſt, throughout his whole life, both yielded and taught obedience to the ceremonial part of the law. He attended the appointed feaſts, and celebrated the Jewiſh paſſover. To the cleanſed leper he ſaid Matt. viii. 4. But go thy way, ſhew thyſelf to the Prieſt, and offer

offer the gift that Moſes commanded, for a teſtimony unto them. Chriſt was born a *Jew*, he lived a *Jew*, and died a *Jew*. Rom. xv. 8. "Now I ſay, that Jeſus Chriſt was a miniſter of the circumciſion, for the truth of God, to confirm the promiſes made unto the fathers." Thus it appears beyond all contradiction, that John's baptiſm begun and ended under the old teſtament; and that it all appertained to the legal diſpenſation.

John was the laſt prophet who appeared before Chriſt, and he was ſent as his forerunner and meſſenger, to prepare his way, and point him out to the Jewiſh nation, as the expected Meſſiah and Saviour. But he lived and died before new teſtament times; and therefore his baptiſm is not new-teſtament or chriſtian baptiſm, which is now ſufficiently proved. To proceed,

Firſt. We learn from what has been preſented, that the ends and deſigns of Chriſt's baptiſm are entirely different from thoſe of new-teſtament baptiſm. For the baptiſm of Chriſt ſignified neither repenrance, nor waſhing from ſin; but goſpel or new teſtament baptiſm implieth both of them.

Secondly. We learn from the ſubject that the baptiſm of Chriſt by John, is not an example for our imitation.

This is a conſequence ſo plain as ſcarce needs to be repeated. Every attentive mind muſt have foreſeen it. We may be told that "We muſt follow Chriſt down the banks of Jordan; we muſt imitate him. He is our pattern, and we muſt follow him. He went down into the water, and came up out of the water." But if we advert to the import of Chriſt's baptiſm, and conſider it to reſpect the manifeſting of Chriſt to Iſrael, as well may we follow Chriſt in his faſting forty days—walking

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on the water—riding into Jeruſalem on an aſs—working miracles—dying between two thieves—or making his grave with the rich in his death. With as much propriety might a man imitate Chriſt in theſe inſtances, as in his baptiſm.

Thirdly. From what has been ſaid, we ſee the miſtake of thoſe who think they muſt follow Chriſt, in being plunged in water. They who fall into this miſtake, ſuppoſe that Chriſt was baptized by way of immerſion. They think Chriſt was plunged all over in water.

But from the deſign of his baptiſm, which was to fulfil what was typified by the waſhing of Aaron at the door of the tabernacle—and from the mode of waſhing only the *hands and the feet* of the Prieſts, is it not almoſt certain that Chriſt was not plunged all over in water? But be that as it may, the baptiſm of Chriſt is not an example for us to follow; becauſe it was quite another thing in deſign and uſe.

Fourthly. We hence perceive that we have neither command nor example for following Chriſt in his baptiſm by John. For they who were baptized by John could neither be baptized into the death of Chriſt, nor yet in the name of the holy Trinity. But goſpel-baptiſm requires this: therefore there is no command to follow Chriſt in his baptiſm. Neither can it be an example of imitation. For they who were baptized by John were afterward baptized in the name of the Trinity. This was the caſe with the twelve diſciples mentioned in Acts. And may we not ſuppoſe this was the caſe with the three thouſand who were baptized on the day of Pentecoſt? For they were Jews who had lived in Judea, and had been concerned in the murder of Chriſt. And ſince John's baptiſm had ſo generally ſpread

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over that region, doubtleſs many of thoſe converts had been baptized by John.

Fifthly. The ſubject conſidered corrects the miſtaken notion, that being buried with Chriſt in baptiſm requires men to be plunged in water. Many have been led into the belief and practiſe of baptiſm by way of plunging, from what is ſaid in the epiſtles to the Romans and Coloſſians, Rom. vi. 3. Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death. Col. ii. 12. Buried with him in baptiſm. But it is a miſtake to ſuppoſe theſe paſſages of ſcripture teach baptiſm by way of plunging. For chriſtians are buried *with* Chriſt; not *like* Chriſt. They are baptized *into his death*; not *into water*. The truth is, the baptiſm meant in theſe places, is not water-baptiſm, but the ſufferings of Chriſt. Luke xii. 50. But I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitned till it be accompliſhed. This baptiſm meaneth the death and ſufferings of Chriſt. and this is the baptiſm to which the apoſtle refers in his epiſtles to the Romans and Coloſſians, as appears from the connection of the words quoted. In this baptiſm all true chriſtians have fellowſhip with Chriſt. In this baptiſm, all the true people of God are crucified, buried, and raiſed with Chriſt in his reſurrection, as a pledge of ſpiritual and corporeal reſurrection.

Sixthly. We ſee that they who imitate Chriſt in his baptiſmal introduction to the miniſtry, cut themſelves off from all churches beſide themſelves. In the book of Exodus, we are informed that it was dangerous for any to imitate the holy oil, with which the Prieſts were conſecrated. And they who did it were to be cut off from the people of God. And may we not be ſurpri-

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zed to ſee how this is done by thoſe who follow Chriſt in his baptiſm? And can we think that baptiſm in imitation of Chriſt at Jordan, will ever be owned and bleſſed by the Great Head of the church?

Seventhly. Since Chriſt has been ſo abundantly preſented, let us be exhorted to receive and obey him. Matt. xi. 29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls. God has placed *him* as King upon his holy hill of Zion. God has anointed *him* with power.

Let every perſon feel that all his ſalvation depends upon obeying all the commands of Chriſt, and following all his imitable examples. Follow him then in meekneſs, in patience, in ſubmiſſion to God, in ſelf-denial, and in ſeeking the glory of God even unto death.

Search the ſcriptures, like the noble Bereans, and ſee whether theſe things are ſo, and with minds open to the truth, receive the truth with joy.

12 DE 67